

A NEW SPECIES OF *VERBESINA* SECTION  
*VERBESINARIA* FROM THE DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

*Verbesina howardiana* is described from Hispaniola.

KEY WORDS: Asteraceae, *Verbesina*, Lesser Antilles, systematics.

During the preparation of the Flora of the Lesser Antilles, the following new taxon was revealed.

*Verbesina howardiana* Olsen, sp. nov. TYPE: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: St. Paul Parish. Morne Trois Piton, 4400 ft, barren area on mountain top, 23 Oct 1964, *D.H. Nicolson 1815*. (holotype: GH).

Frutex ca 1 m altus; cauli exalati, valde cicatricibus foliorum notati. Folia fasciculata sub capitulis, laminae obovatae, apex acute latus ad rotundatem, folia margine minutissime serrata; supra glabrescentia, subtus resinose pubescentia dense in nervis. Capitula ca 1.5 cm diametro; flores radii 19-21, ligulae luteae, ca 11-15 mm longae; flores disci numerosi corollae luteae, tubi glabri. Achaenia nigra, glabra, alae non latae; pappus biaristatus, inaequalis.

Shrub to 1.0 m tall; stems terete, pithy, unwinged, nearly glabrous below and strongly marked by prominent leaf scars, becoming densely pubescent above. Leaves clustered below the capitulescence, obovate, to 12.0 cm long, 7.0 cm wide, apex rounded to broadly acute, base narrows to a short resinous pubescent petiole,  $\leq 1.0$  cm long, margins revolute, minutely serrate, blade glabrous above or with a few resinous hairs along the midvein, densely resinous pubescent along all veins below, very sparsely pubescent on the blade surface. Capitulescence a loose corymb of 12-20 heads on densely pubescent peduncles to 6.0 cm long; heads to 1.5 cm in diameter, excluding the rays. Involucre 2-3 seriate, outer series oblong, 3.0-4.5 mm long, 1.2-1.5 mm wide, inner series oblanceolate, 5.0-5.8 mm long, 1.2-1.5 mm wide, apex rounded to broadly acute, pubescent at the base only, margins not ciliate. Pales 6.5-8.0

mm long, 1.7-2.0 mm wide, glabrous, apex herbaceous, margins not ciliate. Rays 19-21, yellow, ligules 11-15 mm long, 3.2-3.5 mm wide, apex minutely 3-dentate, styles well exerted from the tube; tube 1.8-2.0 mm long, 0.4-0.5 mm wide, pubescent. Disc florets numerous, ca 75, corolla yellow, tubular, 3.8-4.0 mm long, 1.4-1.5 mm wide, tube 1.5 mm long, 0.5 mm wide, glabrous. Ray achenes black, glabrous, 5.0-5.5 mm long, 1.3-1.5 mm wide, thinly winged, wings  $\leq$  0.2 mm wide; awns unequal, to 4.5 mm long. Disc achenes black, glabrous, 5.3-5.5 mm long, 1.7-2.0 mm wide, thinly winged, wings  $\leq$  0.3 mm wide; awns unequal, to 5.0 mm long.

Additional specimens examined (all come from Morne Trois Piton): *K.L. Chambers 2588* (GH); *W.H. Hodge 1397* (GH); *C. Kimber 975* (GH [2 sheets]).

*V. howardiana* is a member of section *Verbesinaria*. All collections of this taxon have been from elevations above 4000 ft, at or near the summit of Morne Trois Pitons in areas described as rain forest (400 inches per year) where it grows in open areas.

*V. howardiana* is related to several Caribbean taxa including *V. guadeloupensis* Urb., *V. karsticola* Proctor and *V. caymanensis* Proctor. *V. howardiana* is easily differentiated from *V. guadeloupensis* on the basis of its corky stem with prominent leaf scars and obovate leaves. It also has a completely glabrous tube on the disc floret. The Urban species has lanceolate leaves, lacks the prominent leaf scars and has a pubescent tube on the disc florets. Both *V. caymanensis* and *V. karsticola* are members of section *Ochtractinia*. *V. caymanensis* has the prominent leaf scars seen in *V. howardiana*, but has white florets and the leaves are serrate to weakly lobed, especially at the apex. *V. karsticola* has a leaf morphology which more closely matches *V. howardiana*, but again has white florets and lacks the prominent leaf scars.

It is a pleasure to name this taxon for Dr. Richard Howard who brought it to my attention during his preparation of the *Flora of the Lesser Antilles*.

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